

King County Parks **Your** **Big Backyard**

King County
Parks and Recreation Division



2007
Second Quarter Report
Parks Omnibus Ordinance Report
to the King County Council
January – June 2007

we're at work so you can play

Highlights of the Second Quarter

- ❖ While the division is on track to meet our 2007 targets, business revenues received through the second quarter of 2007 were lower than during the same period in 2006. In 2006, business revenues were particularly high, principally thanks to increases in enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues such as those generated from partnerships with Cirque du Soleil and Starbucks.
- ❖ From June 8-15, 2007, a remarkable 1,500 volunteers helped King County Parks and Recreation leverage a \$500,000 donation from Starbucks Coffee Company to transform the White Center Heights Park into a vibrant gathering place in the “Ultimate Park Makeover”.
- ❖ Overall, revenues received at Marymoor Park through the second quarter of 2007 are down from 2006. This can be attributed to not yet having received naming rights revenues for the Velodrome (expected in the third quarter of 2007) and to not hosting Cirque du Soleil this year. Per our bi-annual agreement, Cirque du Soleil is expected to return in 2008. Traditional field use revenues are up significantly at Marymoor, due in large part to revenues brought in from the new artificial turf soccer fields.
- ❖ Overall revenues at the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (KCAC) are slightly higher than during same period last year. This has been driven by increased team and event rental revenue. Revenues from other pools are also up slightly over 2006.
- ❖ Due to storm damage, some of the division’s athletic fields opened later than normal, making field rental revenues lower in the second quarter than they might otherwise have been.

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Parks and Recreation Division 2007 Second Quarter Report

Introduction

The Omnibus Parks Ordinance (Ordinance 14509), adopted November 18, 2002, by the King County Council, included this reporting requirement for the Parks and Recreation Division:

“The division shall provide a written report to the council, filed with the clerk of the council, at least four times each year, by March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15, and more frequently as directed by the council by motion, regarding the execution of the division’s duties and responsibilities as established in K.C.C. 2.16.045.E. Following transmittal of each written report, the division shall also make an oral presentation to the council. The written reports and oral presentations shall include, but shall not be limited to, information as to the division’s efforts in:

- A. Meeting revenue targets under section 7 of this ordinance;*
- B. Implementing entrepreneurial strategies including advertising, leasing and concession agreements;*
- C. Pursuing gifts, bequests and donations, including the value and sources of gifts, bequests and donations received;*
- D. Developing agreements with other organizations to provide recreation services;*
- E. Transferring parks and recreation assets within incorporated areas or potential annexation areas to cities; and*
- F. Community outreach and involvement.”*

This is our fifth year reporting on the accomplishments of the division. Quarterly reports were transmitted for each quarter in 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006. The year 2007 also marks the fourth year of the Parks Levy fund, which was approved by the voters in 2003, with collections to run from January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2007.

We have structured the quarterly report to correspond to the ordinance requirements. We welcome your ideas and input. Please do not hesitate to contact Kevin Brown or Tom Koney of the King County Parks and Recreation Division at 206-296-8687 if you have any questions or suggestions.

Revenues - Summary

Parks and Recreation Division Revenues

Total Adopted Revenues, 2007	\$22,097,958
Total Actual Revenues, 2006	\$22,120,229

Second Quarter - Business Revenues Only

Levy funds, interest earnings, interfund transfers and similar revenues that are not within the control of the division are excluded from this total.

Actual Business Revenues¹ (includes user fees and enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues)

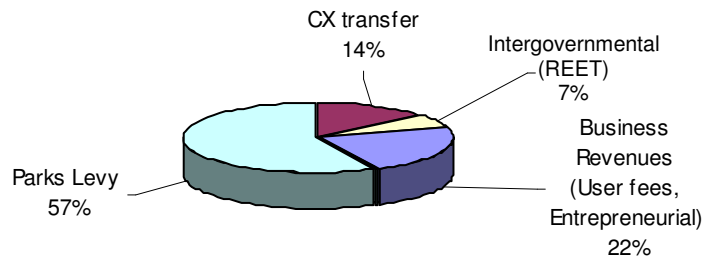
January 1 - June 30, 2007	\$2,225,614
January 1 - June 30, 2006	\$2,582,889

While the division is on track to meet our 2007 targets, business revenues received through the second quarter of 2007 were lower than during the same period in 2006. In 2006, business revenues were particularly high, principally thanks to increases in enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues such as those generated from partnerships with Cirque du Soleil and Starbucks.

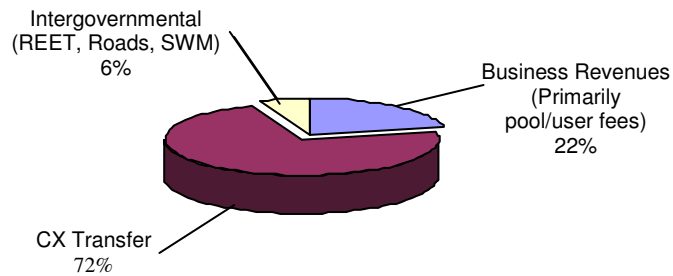
Even with a reduced asset base (due to transfer of facilities), business revenues still comprise about 22% of the division's total revenue budget, the same percentage as in 2002 at the beginning of the implementation of the business plan (see charts, following page). The ensuing period has seen transfers of facilities (mostly pools), which generated more than \$2,000,000 in revenues. The business revenue forecast on the remaining assets has risen from a total of about \$2.3 million in 2002 to nearly \$5 million in the 2007 adopted budget.

¹ Based on ARMS financial reports.

2007 Adopted Revenues - \$22M



2002 Adopted Revenues - \$26M



Expenditures – Summary

Parks and Recreation Division Expenditures

2007 Adopted Expenditures	\$23,084,309
2007 Revised Expenditures ²	\$23,204,499
2006 Adopted Expenditures	\$20,888,426
2006 Revised Expenditures ³	\$22,212,171
2006 Actual Expenditures ⁴	\$21,155,007

Actual Expenditures – through Second Quarter 2007

January 1 - June 30, 2007	\$10,496,854
January 1 - June 30, 2006	\$9,686,480

With half of the year having passed, expenditures were 45% of the division's annual expenditure budget. This expenditure pattern is in line with historical business trends.

In the early years of the levy period, the division underexpended its budget deliberately, given the uncertain nature of business revenues and the need to build a prudent fund balance. In January 2004, at the beginning of the levy period, the division began with a fund balance of zero. At present, the fund balance in the levy fund now achieves the financial planning target (of 1/12 of total Parks and Recreation expenditures). The division continues to look for ways to increase efficiencies and control expenditures.

Now that we have achieved our target fund balance, the division intends, in 2007, to continue to more fully expend its appropriated budget on maintaining and operating parks and facilities, just as we did in 2006. As long as target fund balance is achieved, the division intends to spend the maximum amount of our expenditure authority on maintaining parks, using levy funds as the voters intended.

² Reflects automated carryover and the 1st Quarter Omnibus Ordinances.

³ Reflects automated carryover and adopted through 4th Quarter 2006.

⁴ 2006 figures are per 2006 ARMS.

Revenues - Implementing the Business Plan

Key Business Units

Marymoor Park



Marymoor Business Unit

	2007 thru Q2	2006 thru Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - facilities	\$23,631	\$15,287	\$8,344	55%
Rev - fields	\$330,176	\$79,958	\$250,218	313%
Non-Traditional				
Rev - parking	\$229,436	\$183,403	\$46,033	25%
Rev - campground	\$0	\$374	(\$374)	-100%
Rev - concerts	\$5,862	\$21,618	(\$15,756)	-73%
Rev - concert ticket sales	\$4,956	\$3,150	\$1,806	57%
Rev - Subway	\$7,995	\$7,411	\$584	8%
Rev - Pet Garden	\$4,500	\$750	\$3,750	500%
Sponsors/concessions	\$11,000	\$15,928	(\$4,928)	-31%
Cirque du Soleil	\$0	\$552,600	(\$552,600)	-100%
Naming rights**	\$0	\$105,200	(\$105,200)	-100%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$618,000	\$986,000	(\$368,000)	-37%
Expenditures (rounded)*	\$878,000	\$846,000	\$32,000	4%

* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (4th Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported with annual revenues and compared against the cost-recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

** Revenue from Group Health Velodrome is to be received later in the year.

Second Quarter highlights include:

- ❖ Overall, revenues received at Marymoor Park through the second quarter of 2007 are down from 2006. This is primarily due to the fact that revenues from naming rights at the Velodrome have not yet been received (expected in third quarter 2007) and that Marymoor will not host Cirque du Soleil until 2008. Revenues for other categories are up substantially compared to 2006.
- ❖ Traditional field use revenues are up significantly, due in large part to revenues brought in from the new artificial turf soccer fields. Revenue is also up for some baseball fields, due to increase in fees and adult use.
- ❖ Concert revenue is lower this quarter due to a lighter June schedule, when compared to previous years. We expect concert revenues to pick up substantially in July and August (total concert revenues will be reflected in the Third Quarter Report).
- ❖ The division continues to work to maximize revenue from the Recreation and Event Pad. For example, Evergreen Health Care used the pad for their grand gala fundraising event, which provided the division a total of \$3,780 in new revenue. The sponsor was very pleased with the location and is likely to hold the event at the pad again in 2008.

Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center



Aquatic Center Business Unit

	2007 thru Q2	2006 thru Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - facilities	\$373,434	\$345,309	\$28,125	8%
Rev - courses	\$62,924	\$76,769	(\$13,845)	-18%
Rev – drop-in	\$20,295	\$27,483	(\$7,188)	-26%
Rev – Banquet Hall	\$17,882	\$12,940	\$4,942	38%
Non-Traditional				
Rev – Subway	\$10,837	\$9,627	\$1,210	13%
Rev – concessions	\$576	\$470	\$106	23%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$486,000	\$473,000	\$13,000	3%
Expenditures (rounded)*	\$881,000	\$767,000	\$114,000	15%

* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (4th Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported with annual revenues and compared against the cost-recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

Second Quarter highlights include:

- ❖ Overall revenues at the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (KCAC) are up slightly over the same period last year. This has been driven by increased team and event rental revenue. Revenues from lesson registration and drop-in swim times are still tracking lower than last year, primarily as a result of the closure of the recreational pool facility from January to February 2007 for a capital improvement project, as described in the first quarter 2007 report. Expenditures have risen compared to last year, due to a significant increase in the cost of fuel, electricity and labor.
- ❖ The division continues to implement operational cost efficiencies. A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) project to install the first phase of a security system, including internal and external cameras, was completed during the second quarter and has had an immediate impact on lowering vandalism. This has begun to lower costs of security guard services, as compared to last year.
- ❖ The division was successful in retaining major clients who will again host some of the community's most prestigious social events in the Banquet Hall at the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center. This is despite the recent opening of the new Federal Way Community Center, which will likely compete with the Banquet Hall for event business in the future.
- ❖ The KCAC continues to attract major events that provide substantial economic benefits to the region, including:
 - US Masters Swimming Nationals, held on May 16-20, 2007 and attended by 1,456 adult athletes from around the country
 - 2008 Northwest Conference Men's and Women's Swimming Championships, which will be held in February 2008 and co-hosted by the University of Puget Sound and Pacific Lutheran University
 - Five new University of Washington swimming events

King County Fair in Enumclaw



Fair Business Unit*

	2007 thru Q2	2006 thru Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Rev – Facilities**		\$32,000	(\$32,000)	-100%
Rev - Annual Fair	\$54,000	\$59,000	(\$5,000)	-8%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$54,000	\$91,000	(\$37,000)	-41%
Expenditures (rounded)***	\$97,000	\$297,000	(\$200,000)	-67%

* The division transferred the Fairgrounds to the City of Enumclaw at the end of 2006.

** In 2006, the category "Facilities" included camping.

*** Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (4th Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported with annual revenues and compared against the cost-recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

Second Quarter highlights include:

- ❖ The division transferred the King County Fairgrounds to the City of Enumclaw at the end of 2006. Costs and revenues in 2007 therefore reflect only the county's continued operation of the King County Fair, and not the Fairgrounds, which affect comparisons with previous years.
- ❖ The King County Fair took place July 18 - 22, and results will be reported in the Third Quarter report. During the second quarter of 2007, the "Dance to the Moo-sic" Fair theme was established for the 2007 fair. Regular meetings with the City of Enumclaw were held to coordinate the division's use of the Fairgrounds for the 2007 Fair.

Recreation, Ballfields and Facilities



Ballfields and Recreation Business Unit

	2007 thru Q2	2006 thru Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - Ballfields	\$129,116	\$143,770	(\$14,654)	-10%
Rev - Facilities	\$67,311	\$52,614	\$14,697	28%
Non-Traditional				
Rev - RV Camping	\$11,776	\$12,535	(\$759)	-6%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$208,000	\$209,000	(\$1,000)	0%

Note: Annual expenditure information on facilities and ballfields will be discussed in the Fourth Quarter Report.

Second Quarter highlights include:

- ❖ Overall, revenues received from ballfields and recreation facilities are similar to the same period in 2006.
- ❖ Due to storm damage, some fields opened later than normal, so field rentals were lower in the second quarter than they might have been. Camping facilities also opened later than normal due to storm damage.

Swimming Pools



Swimming Pools (other than the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center)
includes: Evergreen, Renton, Vashon and Cottage Lake Facilities

	2007 thru Q2	2006 thru Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - Pool Fees	\$297,696	\$297,867	(\$171)	0%
Rev - Concessions	\$4,216	\$380	\$3,836	1010%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$302,000	\$298,000	\$4,000	1%
Expenditures (rounded)*	\$422,000	\$339,000	\$83,000	24%

* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor") or costs associated with aquatic administration. In the year-end (4th Quarter) report, overall annual expenditures will be reported with annual revenues and compared against the cost-recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

Second Quarter highlights include:

- ❖ Overall, revenues through the second quarter are slightly higher than the same period in 2006.
- ❖ The Cottage Lake Pool opened the 2007 summer season with a new circular water slide, which has increased pool attendance by more than 20%.
- ❖ The Urban Growth Area (UGA) pools continue to provide important recreational services in their respective local communities. The Renton and Evergreen Pools presented water safety awareness programs to more than 250 participants as part of the Drowning Prevention Coalition's "April Pools Day".
- ❖ Pool expenditures are up, in part due to increased energy and labor costs. In particular, an FTE position was held vacant in early 2006 because the Evergreen Pool appeared likely to transfer and the duties of this position were filled by a variety of short-term measures, including short-term temporary help. The transfer did not occur as expected, so the FTE position was filled.

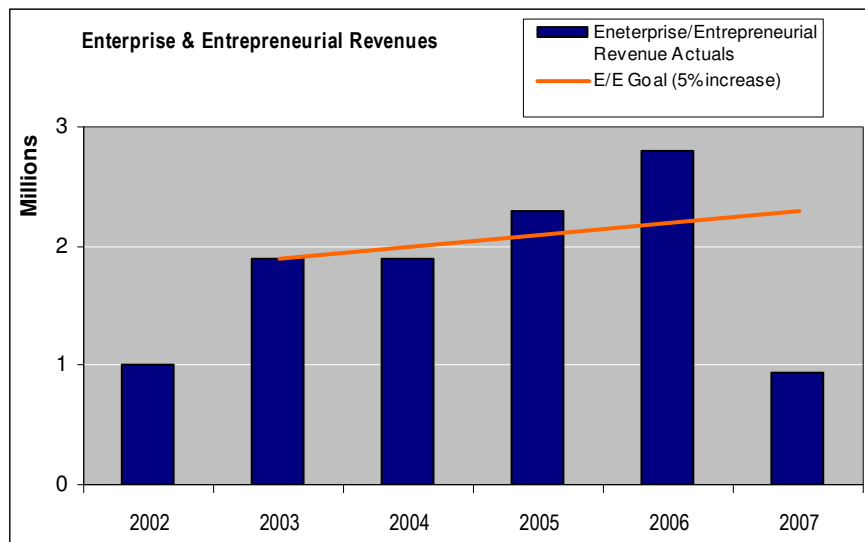
Implementing Entrepreneurial Strategies New Ways of Raising Revenues



Entrepreneurial Strategies

In 2006, the division exceeded our goal of a 5% annual increase in enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues since 2003. With 2007 investments from Starbucks, a commitment from Cirque du Soleil to return in 2008, and a fully staffed enterprise team, the outlook for enterprise and entrepreneurial revenue in 2007 and 2008 looks equally bright.

During the second quarter of 2007, the division received more than \$600,000 in enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues. The 2007 second quarter entrepreneurial revenue reflects the \$500,000 donation from Starbucks for the White Center Heights Park makeover project.



Second Quarter highlights include:

- ❖ From June 8-15, 2007, a remarkable 1,500 volunteers helped King County Parks and Recreation leverage a \$500,000 donation from Starbucks Coffee Company to transform the White Center Heights Park into a vibrant gathering place in the “Ultimate Park Makeover”.
- ❖ Marymoor’s four new artificial turf fields have yielded substantially higher revenues, in part because they require little-to-no maintenance and are playable year-round.
- ❖ Parking revenue at Marymoor Park has increased from the same period in 2006.
- ❖ Event rentals at the Clise Mansion at Marymoor Park have increased from the same period in 2006.
- ❖ A map, which was created with support from Starbucks Coffee Company and features the division’s 175-mile network of regional trails, is being distributed in Starbucks retail stores in King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties.

Pursuing Gifts, Bequests, and Donations

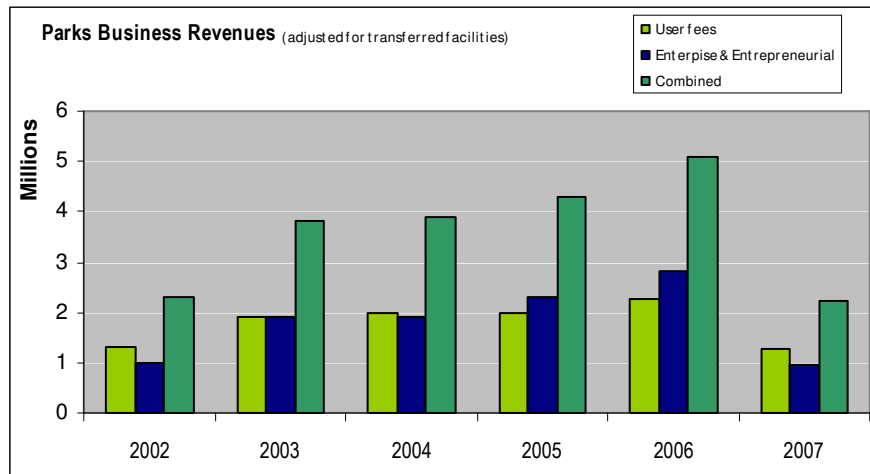
- ❖ In addition to the \$500,000 Starbucks Ultimate Park Makeover grant, White Center has also received the following grants to date in support of its teen programs:
 - City of Seattle Weed and Seed - \$35,000
 - Greater King County Police Activities League - \$4,000
 - Community Enhancement Grant for Community Talent Show - \$500
- ❖ The division applied for a National Recreation Trails Program (NRTTP) grant in the amount of \$75,000. A response is expected in September 2007.
- ❖ The division has received \$4,500 in donations to date in 2007 for the pet garden in Marymoor Park.

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As the Department of Natural Resources and Parks develops strategies for long-term funding, including the August renewal levy, the division will maximize enterprise and entrepreneurial revenue along with exploring other actions that minimize the tax subsidy needed for active recreation facilities. The division will continue to foster and develop corporate, non-profit and community-based partnerships in an effort to increase revenues and leverage Revenue Enhancement and Opportunity Fund capital dollars.

Overall business revenues include user fee revenues and enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues. The division defines “user fees” as the more traditional recreational activities,

such as pool fees, field rentals, and recreational programs. These revenues are based upon what the market will bear. “Enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues” include a myriad of other non-traditional activities, ranging from corporate sponsorships, parking, and facility rentals (including concert series and Cirque du Soleil) and are generated largely as a result of the cultivation efforts of our division’s entrepreneurial team.



Enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues occur throughout the park system and several initiatives have been identified already in individual business unit descriptions.

The division continues to aggressively pursue mutually beneficial agreements through the Partnership for Parks initiative which generates revenue through the implementation of the following opportunities:

1. Maximize revenue from existing assets
2. Corporate partnerships and gifts
3. Aggressively pursue gifts, bequests and legacy donations
4. Real estate opportunities – continue to evaluate long-term revenue opportunities on King County lands to benefit the division

Agreements with Other Organizations **Community Partnership & Grants (CPG) Program**

The Community Partnership and Grants (CPG) Program continues to spearhead the development of partnerships that result in new facilities and amenities throughout King County. There are currently 23 partnership projects either already implemented or under development that represent \$7.4 million in CPG grants and/or CIP grant commitments. Once completed, these projects will add nearly \$40 million in leveraged community investment (cash, grants, in-kind, donations, volunteers, etc.) and will not result in any new tax-funded operations or maintenance costs, thanks to the supplemental maintenance and programming commitments made by the community partners. Groundbreakings and announcements will occur throughout 2007, and several projects will be completed and operational, including the new Preston Athletic Fields and Community Park in October 2007. Below are highlights of the 23 projects underway:



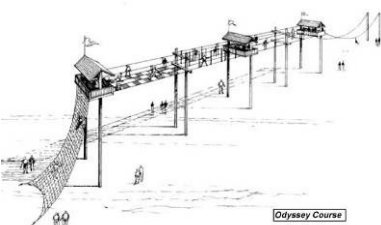
New boathouse at Marymoor Park



New Community Center at Lakewood Park



New synthetic ballfields and park in Preston



New challenge course at Cottage Lake



New whitewater takeout on Mid Fork



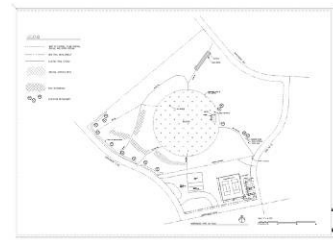
New 100 acre mountain bike skills park and riding area at Duthie Hill



Improvements/development at Ravensdale Park



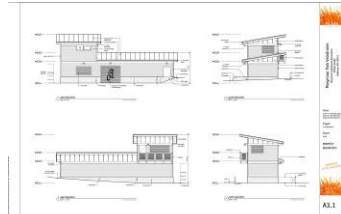
Astronomy Site at Hobart



New park in Mirrormont



Audubon trail / kiosks at Marymoor Park



New velodrome race building at Marymoor Park

For more details about CPG projects, visit:
www.kingcounty.gov/parks/cpg

King County Parks **Your**  King County
Big Backyard

Transferring Parks and Recreation Assets

Transferring local parks to cities and focusing on rural and regional programs is a key element of the Parks Business Plan. Consistent with the Parks Business Plan, the transfer of parks and pools within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) is being discussed as part of a broader county annexation strategy. The division will also seek to transfer properties in advance of actual annexations whenever possible.

Effective the first of this year, King County transferred to the City of Enumclaw the King County Fairgrounds, Sportsman Park, Farmers Park, and two parcels across the street from the Fairgrounds. In addition, Meerwood, Sammamish Cove and Timberlake Parks were transferred to the City of Issaquah during the first quarter of 2007. The division continues to explore options to transfer the remaining two UGA pools (Renton and Evergreen); however transfers are unlikely in 2007.

The division has made significant progress transferring properties since the development of the Parks Business Plan. Due to Washington State legislative changes, the division anticipates swifter annexations and park transfers of the few eligible remaining sites. When the Business Plan was developed in 2002, the Parks and Recreation Division had local pools and parks inside the UGA boundary, which were costing the division more than \$7 million to operate.

The parks and facilities that have been transferred to date include:

Auburn Pool	City of Auburn	Jenkins Creek Park	City of Carnation
Auburndale Two Park	City of Auburn	Juanita Beach Park	City of Kirkland
Beaver Lake Park	City of Sammamish	King County Fairgrounds	City of Enumclaw
Bridle Crest Trail (Redmond)	City of Redmond	Lake Burien School Site	City of Burien
Coal Creek Park	City of Bellevue	Lake Heights Park	City of Bellevue
Des Moines Creek Park	City of SeaTac	Lake Sawyer Park	City of Black Diamond
East Auburn Athletic Fields	City of Auburn	Lake Wilderness Park	City of Maple Valley
Eastgate Park	City of Bellevue	Lea Hill Park	City of Auburn
Enumclaw Golf Course	City of Enumclaw	Lewis Creek Natural Area	City of Issaquah
Enumclaw Pool	City of Enumclaw	Luther Burbank Park	City of Mercer Island
Farmers Park	City of Enumclaw	Manor Hill Park	City of Bellevue
Federal Way Pool	City of Federal Way	Meerwood Park	City of Issaquah
Fort Dent Park	City of Tukwila	Mercer Island Pool	City of Mercer Island & Northwest Center
Grandview Park	City of SeaTac	Mt. Rainier Pool	Cities of Des Moines & Normandy Park, & Highline School District

Northshore Pool	Northwest Center
OO Denny Park	City of Seattle
Redmond Pool	Northwest Center
Salmon Creek Park	City of Burien
Salmon Creek Waterway	City of Burien
Sammamish Cove	City of Issaquah
Shamrock Park	Si View Metropolitan Park District
Si View Park	Si View Metropolitan Park District
Si View Pool	Si View Metropolitan Park District
Slough House Park	City of Redmond
South Central Pool	City of Tukwila
South Park Farm	City of Seattle
Sportsman Park	City of Enumclaw
Tahoma Pool	City of Covington
Three Forks Natural Area	City of Snoqualmie
Timberlake Park	City of Issaquah

The division continues to work with cities and parks districts on the transfer of the remaining UGA facilities, including:

Bridle Crest Trail	City of Bellevue
West Hill Park	City of Bothell
Juanita Triangle	Finn Hill Park and Recreation District
Juanita Heights Park	Finn Hill Park and Recreation District
Klahanie Park	City of Issaquah
Swamp Creek	City of Kenmore
Inglewood Wetlands	City of Kenmore
Kingsgate Park	City of Kirkland
Windsor Vista Park	City of Kirkland
132 nd Square Park	City of Kirkland
Tollgate Farm – middle site	City of North Bend
Cascade Park	City of Renton
Maplewood Park	City of Renton
May Creek Park	City of Renton
Sierra Heights/Honey Dew Park	City of Renton
Renton Pool	City of Renton
Soaring Eagle (30 acre portion)	City of Sammamish
Sunset Playfield	City of SeaTac

In addition to the transfer agreements and efforts identified above, the county has long-term lease agreements for operations of the following facilities:

Gold Greek Lodge	Operated by Boys & Girls Club of King County
West Hill Community Center	Operated by Boys & Girls Club of King County

Community Outreach and Involvement



In the second quarter of 2007, there were 67 volunteer events, with 2,808 volunteers donating some 13,877 hours of service. Projects included building and maintaining trails (24 events); restoring habitat and removing noxious weeds (19 events); supporting the King County Greenhouse and Nursery (8 events); and improving and maintaining our parks (16 events).

All volunteer events were carried out in collaboration with our community-based partners, such as Washington Trails Association, East Lake Washington Audubon, White Center Community Development Association, and Friends of Soaring Eagle, local schools, and companies such as Starbucks Coffee Company and REI.

Second Quarter highlights include:

- ❖ From June 8-15, 2007, a remarkable 1,500 volunteers who donated more than 4,000 hours of hard work helped King County Parks and Recreation leverage a \$500,000 donation from Starbucks Coffee Company to transform White Center Heights Park into a vibrant gathering place. A collaborative project, the White Center Heights Park makeover was designed through the participation of community members and carried out with the assistance of Starbucks employees, students from University of Washington's College of Architecture and Urban Planning, the White Center Community Development Association, and members of the White Center community.
- ❖ Volunteer trail work, organized in collaboration with Washington Trails Association, focused on backcountry trails in the areas of Cougar Mountain, O'Grady, Squak Mountain, Soaring Eagle, Grand Ridge, and Taylor Mountain Forest.

- ❖ The volunteer habitat restoration efforts included invasive species removal at Marymoor Park and Log Cabin Natural Area, as well as restoration maintenance work at Auburn Narrows, Cavanaugh Pond, Tolt-MacDonald, and Cougar Mountain.
- ❖ The King County Greenhouse and Nursery hosted eight volunteer events, which involved potting some 3,000 tree seedlings that will be used for future restoration projects in King County parks and natural areas.

Reconnecting People to Their Parks: Outreach and Reconnecting Strategy

www.parksfeedback.com

Launched in December 2005 as a pilot program and expanded to the entire parks system in the second quarter of 2006, *parksfeedback.com* has proven to be an extremely useful customer feedback tool connecting citizens and user groups with the division.

Through *parksfeedback.com*, we receive a variety of compliments, suggestions, feedback, and notifications, which are delivered directly to the email inboxes of division staff. While the feedback system does not provide a statistical gauge for constituent satisfaction, it is a powerful tool that asks a series of multiple choice questions, allows users to write in comments, and also include their email or telephone number to receive a direct response from the division.

Some examples of comments received during the second quarter include:

"I really appreciate the dog clean-up bags you have provided at this park, and I wanted to let you know how nice the flowers around the sign look. Thank you!"

"We liked the climbing structure."

"I use the trail 3-5 times a week to commute to work. I also use it for recreation when riding with my child."

"The trail was great, the kiosks are great and the little map 'Regional Trails' I found at Starbucks is great, it got me there in the trees."

"I live in Redmond for Marymoor dog park, I love it! Thank you."

The notifications sent by parks users through the *parksfeedback.com* tool also serves as our "eyes and ears on the ground" for our 25,000 acres of park properties. This meant that even with our current, smaller staffing levels, we have been able to remain connected with our citizens and to communicate promptly and directly with them.

Communications from park users have helped the division to identify problem areas in parks and along trails, such as incidents of graffiti and vandalism, and to immediately respond to citizens' concerns. This has also assisted the division in prioritizing short, medium and long-term maintenance issues and capital improvement needs.

Here are a few examples of notifications received in the second quarter of 2007 and how the division was able to respond:

Comment: *"There is more gang graffiti in the tunnel that goes under 96th street at Wayne Golf Course."*

The division responded by sending a trail crew out to investigate and remove the graffiti within 48 hours of having received this email.

Comment: *"I just got general seating tickets for the Brian Regan show in July for me and my husband. I am a wheelchair user. Can you please tell me where wheelchair users and their companions are seated? Thanks for your help."*

The division responded directly to this concert-goer by email within one business day and explained where and how she should enter the concert venue.

Comment: *"The playground equipment was recently removed at 132nd Square Park - is it going to be replaced or is it permanently removed?"*

The division responding directly to this park user by email within one business day, explaining the situation, informing him of an upcoming community meeting on this topic, and providing contact information for the division staff and community groups involved in this process.